

NRO REVIEW COMPLETED

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COR-0347

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19 February 1959

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

THROUGH : Deputy Director, (Plans)

SUBJECT : Visit of Deputy Director of Central Intelligence
and Party to Vandenberg Air Force Base

1. This memorandum is for information only.

2. The first shot in the DISCOVERER program will be launched from Vandenberg Air Force Base on 25 February 1959. This launch is a purely engineering shot and will not contain a CORONA payload. The CORONA payload is being assembled at Palo Alto, California and will be transported to Vandenberg Air Force Base prior to a CORONA shot. At that time it will be taken directly to the payload assembly building in the Lockheed area. This building will be used by CORONA payload technicians identified as Lockheed Advanced Engineering Personnel and the Bio-medical personnel. Each group will occupy one-half of the building. The Advanced Engineering section of the building should be avoided as presence of personalities connected with intelligence might imply that the Advanced Engineering section is interested in reconnaissance.

3. Following is a list of CORONA cleared key personnel in the organization indicated that may be in contact with the visiting Agency party.

AFFORD

Col. Fredrick Oder
Col. Harry L. Evans

SPACE TECH. LAB
Mr. Allan Francis Donovan

SAC
Gen. Horace M. Wade
Gen. Thomas S. Power

ARPA
Mr. Roy Johnson

LOCKHEED

Mr. Eugene Root

Mr. James W. Plummer

USAF
Gen. Thomas D. White
Gen. Curtis E. Lemay
Mr. Richard E. Horner

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It should be noted that some of the members of the Agency party are not COMINTA cleared.

4. Extreme press interest will be shown in this particular launch since it is the first launch from Vandenberg Air Force Base. Although the entire DISCOVERER series is to be known as an R & D effort, the press has speculated as to a possible camera carrying capability in later launches. An example of this speculation is found in the following quote from the 16 February edition of Aviation Week:

... . No cameras will be carried in initial shot. Except for changes in payload makeup, Discoverer is essentially the same as USAF's WS-117L Sentry reconnaissance satellite

The above quotation and others clearly indicate that the press has not entirely accepted the R & D story and is looking for evidence of a reconnaissance capability. For this reason any personalities connected with intelligence collection, especially photographic intelligence collection, must be extremely careful that their mere presence at the launch site is not interpreted as a confirmation of the speculation about the reconnaissance capability of later DISCOVERER payloads.

(S/
[Redacted]
Assistant Cover Officer
DPD-DD/P

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DPD-DD/P: [Redacted]

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